

Librarian Testifies at Budget Hearing

The Library's fiscal 2023 budget was the subject of a Senate hearing.

BY MARÍA PEÑA

Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden last week asked a Senate Appropriations subcommittee to approve a 3.9% budget increase for fiscal 2023 – funding intended to strengthen the Library's modernization efforts and its public engagement initiatives.

As reported in the [May 6 Gazette issue](#), the Library has requested a budget of \$871.8 million for fiscal 2023, an increase of \$32.8 million over enacted funding levels for the fiscal year that ends in September.

The bulk of the increase – \$24.4 million – would fund important new initiatives that advance modernization and public engagement and expand staff expertise, Hayden said. The balance represents mandatory pay and price-level increases and nonrecurring funds to implement phases of previously funded initiatives.

"With new, modern IT infrastructure in place, thanks to your support, we are now using continuous innovation and delivery to ensure that we are constantly optimizing and modernizing the technology used to meet the Library's mission," Hayden told the Senate Appropriations Legislative Branch Subcommittee on June 22.

Sen. Jack Reed (D-Rhode Island) chaired the hearing. Also present was the subcommittee's ranking member, Sen. Mike Braun (R-In-

SENATE, CONTINUED ON 7



Beowulf Sheehan

Jesmyn Ward will accept the prize in a virtual National Book Festival ceremony.

Jesmyn Ward to Receive Prize for American Fiction

Ward is the acclaimed author of the novels 'Sing, Unburied, Sing' and 'Salvage the Bones.'

Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden announced this week that Jesmyn Ward will receive the 2022 Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction. At 45, Ward is the youngest person to receive the Library's fiction award for her lifetime of work.

One of the Library's most prestigious awards, the annual prize honors an American literary writer whose body of work is distinguished not only for its mastery of the art but also for its originality of thought and imagination. The award seeks to commend strong, unique, enduring voices that – throughout consistently accomplished careers – have told us something essential about the American experience.

"Jesmyn Ward's literary vision continues to become more expansive and piercing, addressing urgent questions about racism and social injustice being voiced by Americans," Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden said. "Jesmyn's writing is precise yet magical, and I am pleased to recognize her contributions to literature with this prize."

Hayden selected Ward as this year's winner based on nominations from more than 60 distinguished literary figures, including former winners of the prize, acclaimed authors and literary critics from around the world. The virtual prize ceremony will take place at the 2022 National Book

FICTION PRIZE, CONTINUED ON 6

DONATED TIME

The following employee has satisfied eligibility requirements to receive leave donations from other staff members. Contact Amy McAllister at amcallister@loc.gov.

Lynette Brown

NO GAZETTE JULY 8

The Gazette will not publish on July 8 because of the federal July 4 holiday. Publication will resume on July 15.

NOTARY PUBLIC SERVICE AVAILABLE

Anthony Dunn will provide notary public services for Library employees in the Office of the General Counsel, LM 601, by appointment on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to noon and on Thursdays from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Contact him for an appointment at OGCnotary@loc.gov.

COPYRIGHT CLAIMS BOARD NOW ACCEPTING CLAIMS

The new Copyright Claims Board (CCB) officially opened for business on June 16 to resolve copyright disputes of a relatively low economic value. It serves as an efficient, less expensive alternative to federal court.

The CCB is now accepting claims through an electronic case management system, eCCB. Developed through a collaboration between the Office of the Chief Information Officer and the Copyright Office, the user-friendly eCCB application allows the public to file, receive and review documents related to CCB proceedings.

[Access the system through the new CCB website.](#)



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The Library's central mission is to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

ABOUT THE GAZETTE

An official publication of the Library of Congress, The Gazette encourages Library managers and staff to submit articles and photographs of general interest. Submissions will be edited to convey the most necessary information.

Back issues of The Gazette in print are available in the Communications Office, LM 143. Electronic archived issues and a color PDF file of the current issue are available online at loc.gov/staff/gazette.

GAZETTE WELCOMES LETTERS FROM STAFF

Staff members are invited to use the Gazette for lively and thoughtful debate relevant to Library issues. Letters must be signed by the author, whose place of work and telephone extension should be included so we can verify authorship. If a letter calls for management response, an explanation of a policy or actions or clarification of fact, we will ask for management response.—Ed.

Library of Congress Gazette
Washington, DC 20540-1620

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ISSN 2831-5626 (online)
ISSN: 1049-8184 (print)

Printed by the Printing Management Section

GAZETTE DEADLINES

The deadline for editorial copy for the July 22 Gazette is Wednesday, July 13.

Email editorial copy and letters to the editor to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

To promote events through the Library's online calendar (www.loc.gov/loc/events) and the Gazette Calendar, email event and contact information to calendar@loc.gov by 9 a.m. Monday of the week of publication.

Boxed announcements should be submitted electronically (text files) by 9 a.m. Monday the week of publication to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

Library Captivates Professional Association Visitors

The Library rolled out the welcome mat for the ALA's annual conference.

BY WENDI A. MALONEY

Library staff members greeted colleagues from around the country and even the world last week during the American Library Association's (ALA) 2022 annual conference. Held in Washington, D.C., this year, it began on June 23 and continued through Tuesday. It was ALA's first in-person conference since January 2020.

The gathering took place at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. Between sessions, attendees visited the Library for multiple offerings, including a well-attended Saturday evening open house in the Jefferson Building. The Library also hosted a pavilion in the convention center for the duration of the conference.

"This sort of peer-to-peer professional development opportunity fits nicely into our vision of connecting all Americans to the Library," Mark Sweeney, principal deputy Librarian of Congress, said. "How better to do that than by speaking directly to so many enthusiastic colleagues in the library field?"

A happy din was audible in the Great Hall on Saturday as visitors to the open house filed into the Main Reading Room, phones turned upward to capture the art and architecture. "Wow!" one exclaimed. "Oh, how lovely!" said another.

Dawn Kight, dean of libraries at Southern University, sat at a desk in the reading room, imagining what it would be like to immerse herself in research in such surroundings. "It's truly amazing," she said.

Eliz State, a librarian at Kyambogo University in Kampala, Uganda,



A performance artist dramatizes a bilingual Spanish-English children's story on June 24 in the Hispanic Reading Room.

Shawn Miller

said the Library compares to no other in the world: "For me, this is what a library is."

Cassie Spivey, an elementary school librarian from Kearney, Nebraska, wanted to learn more about the room's art and architecture. Luckily for her, Library staff in black T-shirts imprinted with the Library logo stood ready around the room to answer questions.

On the mezzanine above the Great Hall, dozens more black-T-shirted staff awaited visitors at display tables.

The U.S. Copyright Office exhibited original stuffed-toy deposits of copyrighted Sesame Street characters – Big Bird, Ernie, Bert. The Prints and Photographs Division highlighted holdings related to the annual National Cherry Blossom Festival.

The Music Division exhibited a StoryMap about a 1936 production of the Federal Theater Project's *Negro Unit*. The Acquisitions and Bibliographic Access Directorate hosted cataloging games and

quizzes. And the Digital Services Directorate asked visitors about their earliest memories of the internet.

Some of the answers? "Talking with my uncle about what a router did when I was 8 ... in 1985"; the virtual pet website Neopets; and downloading custom content for "The Sims" video game.

With its arched canopy and pillars recalling the Jefferson Building's Great Hall, the Library's pavilion at the convention center was familiar to many ALA attendees from past conferences and from the National Book Festival.

Divisions from across the Library held office hours at each of the pavilion's pillars to answer questions from conference-goers. Presentations and trivia games were also on offer.

"People at the conference had an overwhelmingly positive response to the Library's pavilion this year," Michelle Spezzacatena of the Signature Programs Office said. "We

ALA, CONTINUED ON 6

Pilot Launches to Measure Strategic Plan's Success

Agencywide key performance indicators will be tested.

BY LIZ WHITE

The Library is launching a pilot today to test its first agencywide key performance indicators (KPIs), developed to track the success of its strategic plan. Through the pilot, the Library will use data to build a dashboard that combines metrics and visualizations.

Ultimately, the project will result in a set of agency-level performance indicators that provide quantitative evidence of the Library's progress toward achieving three strategic goals: expanding access to the Library, enhancing its services and optimizing its resources.

"We are excited to see how these KPIs can show the value of all the work being done across the Library," Robin Dale, deputy librarian for library collections and services, said. "It will be helpful to have it all accessible in one place."

Said Dianne Houghton, director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Performance Management (SPPM): "Ultimately, the KPI dashboard will help us tell the Library's story through data."

Seven tiger teams, composed of staff from across the Library, worked throughout last fall and winter to explore potential KPIs. In February, the teams recommended 99 measures supporting six KPI areas identified by a working group of Library leaders: availability, engagement, user satisfaction, modernization, employee investment and nonappropriated resources.

After the working group reviewed the recommendations, a subset of the tiger team recommendations was deemed actionable for testing. Service units had already been relying on the measures selected, which means that no new data collection or reporting processes

need to be designed at this point.

The KPI design team, led by Emily Roberts of SPPM, is working with a data analyst from the Federal Research Division to analyze the data and construct a KPI dashboard. SPPM is coordinating with both the Office of the Chief Information Officer and the Office of Communications to develop the dashboard.

Initially, it will be strictly for internal consumption. But Library leaders will eventually determine which metrics will be published on a public dashboard, set to be released in January 2024.

Beyond launch of the pilot, SPPM will also explore additional measures related to user satisfaction and use of Library collections and assets. A usage tiger team was tasked with defining what it means to make use of the Library's assets. Relying on information provided by the tiger team, SPPM

will work closely with the Library Collections and Services Group to define metrics and context to demonstrate usage.

SPPM will also collaborate with public-facing offices, such as the Center for Learning, Literacy and Engagement, to develop a uniform approach to measuring user satisfaction with the Library. In addition, SPPM will revisit measures recommended by the tiger teams that require more work to become actionable.

The KPI pilot will run from July through September and will inform a planned launch of additional KPIs in October.

"Both the pilot and the October expansion are learning experiences," Houghton said. "We hope to use fiscal 2023 to determine what is truly valuable to Library leadership and what information is the most helpful." ■

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Shawn Miller

Susan Morris

Susan Morris is assistant to the director for acquisitions and bibliographic access. She will retire from the Library this month.

Tell us about your background.

I grew up in the Navy. Both my parents were naval officers, and we lived up and down both U.S. coasts. They retired to Miami, where I went to high school and met my husband. I went to Bryn Mawr College, a small women's college near Philadelphia. My family had lived in many places in New England and California but never in the mid-Atlantic, so I wanted to go somewhere that would be new.

What drew you to Library work?

I always wanted to be a librarian, and I never seriously wanted to be anything else. Like most kids, I had a brief period of wanting to be in the movies, but the movie job I wanted was to be the “continuity girl” – the person who makes sure that all the props are aligned from one shot to the next so that a scene can be filmed in several takes and still appear seamless. I guess I have a big interest in stability and, yes, continuity.

How did your Library career evolve?

I worked as a technician at the Bryn Mawr College Library and at

Florida International University's library. That was a fascinating job because the university had just been established, and we stocked and opened a brand-new library. It was in a disused airplane hangar without air conditioning. I think it taught me that buildings are important, but the real library is the collections and the staff!

Later, I went to Drexel University's School of Library Science, after which I worked as a music manuscript cataloger at the Free Library of Philadelphia, funded by the Ford Foundation. Then, I worked as a cataloger at the Harvard College Library for five years.

I came to the Library of Congress in December 1984. In 1989, I joined the Whole Book Cataloging Project, which combined the tasks of descriptive and subject cataloging. In January 1995, I became the assistant to the director for cataloging.

What are some of the major changes you've witnessed?

When I started at the Library, technical processing work was siloed. I was a descriptive cataloger of English-language monographs.

That gave me the chance to study the descriptive cataloging rules intensively, but I literally didn't know where my books came from – the section head brought them to staff members at their desks – and I never actually completed a title, because my only assignment was the descriptive aspect of the cataloging, which covers information such as who wrote a book, who edited it and what publisher issued it when.

The Whole Book Cataloging Project was an opportunity to perform both descriptive and subject cataloging in a variety of languages.

What achievements are you most proud of?

I was part of the steering committee that oversaw the fiscal 2009 merger of the Library's acquisitions and cataloging directorates, resulting in the Acquisitions and Bibliographic Access Directorate (ABA). I'm proud that

we did it the right way, first redesigning the acquisitions and cataloging workflows and then proposing an administrative structure and full-scale training to support those workflows.

In addition, I was the document editor for a nationwide test by a couple dozen libraries, which proved that staff could apply the new cataloging instructions “RDA: Resource Description and Access” efficiently and effectively. The test results led the Library and the international consortium Program for Cooperative Cataloging to adopt RDA for most new cataloging in March 2013.

I also supported ABA's teleworkers for 15 years prior to the pandemic. When the Library adopted maximum telework, ABA had a relatively easy adjustment, because nearly half our staff members were already teleworking two days a week.

And, believe it or not, I always loved drafting ABA's annual report, because I am very proud to be part of an organization that contributes so much to the national community of lifelong learners, each and every year.

What are a couple of your fondest memories?

I look back fondly on the tours I've led of ABA work areas for new Library employees, American Library Association conference participants, colleagues' children during Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day and organizations from Amazon to the FBI. Our “tourists” asked great questions and always seemed impressed at the scale and complexity of our acquisitions and cataloging operations.

What's next for you?

My husband and I hope to split our time between the Washington area and Florida, where we still have family. And as every grandparent knows, spoiling the grandchildren is a full-time job! ■

FICTION PRIZE, CONTINUED FROM 1

Festival on Sept. 3 in Washington, D.C.

"I am deeply honored to receive this award, not only because it aligns my work with legendary company, but because it also recognizes the difficulty and rigor of meeting America on the page, of appraising her as a lover would: clear-eyed, open-hearted, keen to empathize and connect," Ward said. "This is our calling, and I am grateful for it."

Ward is the acclaimed author of the novels "Where the Line Bleeds"; "Salvage the Bones," winner of the 2011 National Book Award; and "Sing, Unburied, Sing," winner of the 2017 National Book Award. Her nonfiction work includes the memoir "Men We Reaped," a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, and the 2020 work "Navigate Your Stars." Ward is also the editor of the anthology "The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks About Race."

Ward is one of only six writers to receive the National Book Award more than once and the only woman and Black American to do so. Ward received a MacArthur Fellowship in 2017 and was the John and Renée Grisham writer in residence at the University of Mississippi in 2010-11. In 2018, she was named to Time magazine's list of 100 most influential people in the world.

Upon hearing the news, John Grisham, bestselling author and the 2009 recipient of the Library's Creative Achievement Award for Fiction, said, "Few American writers are confronting race and social injustice with the clarity of Jesmyn Ward. And she does it with beautiful writing and unforgettable stories."

Ward lives in Mississippi and is a professor of creative writing at Tulane University.

More information on the prize, including about previous winners, is [available here](#). ■

ALA, CONTINUED FROM 3

were able to answer hundreds of questions about the Library's services and connect librarians to resources they can use at their home libraries."

Between sessions and visits to the pavilion, attendees made their way to the Library for more than 10 special events and presentations.

On Friday, the Hispanic Reading Room hosted a festive afternoon of storytelling in collaboration with REFORMA, an ALA affiliate that encourages libraries to include Spanish-language materials, recruit bilingual professionals and generally meet the literacy needs of the Latino community.

The audience delighted in a performance artist who acted out a children's story with puppets and props and in a moving recitation by prizewinning poet Jorge Argueta.

Other on-site offerings included behind-the-scenes tours of the Preservation Directorate, Veterans History Project workshops on oral history interviewing techniques and instruction on how to use the Library's resources to research genealogy.

The Geography and Map Division welcomed visitors to its reading

room, and the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled offered tours of its Taylor Street offices.

On Sunday at the convention center, Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden drew a crowd with an address about the role of libraries and librarians in the misinformation age.

"I want to thank all of you for your devotion and commitment to this weekend's American Library Association annual conference," Hayden wrote to staff on Tuesday. "It makes me feel proud and honored to work with all of you. From the set up in the pavilion to the open house, ALA attendees were raving how genuinely helpful and friendly the Library staff were in answering their questions."

During the conference, Judith Cannan, chief of the Library's Policy, Training and Cooperative Programs Division, accepted the ALA Medal of Excellence, one of the association's highest honors. The ALA also conferred the Margaret Mann Citation on Cannan, as reported in the [June 10 issue of the Gazette](#).

Katelyn (Drew) Robertson, a 2022 junior fellow, contributed to this story. ■



IT and Technology Questions?

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SENATE, CONTINUED FROM 1

diana), who praised the Library's reopening efforts amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The nearly hourlong hearing also included testimony from Gene Dodaro, comptroller general of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), about his agency's budget request.

In his opening remarks, Reed noted that neither the COVID-19 pandemic nor the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol last year stopped the Library or GAO "from delivering for Congress and for the American people."

He continued: "We want to make sure that your agencies have the tools needed to gradually reopen and responsibly resume normal operations. Congress owes it to your employees not only to provide the resources needed to do their jobs, but also to meet any new demands or innovations identified in the pandemic."

Braun praised the Library's "important work to preserve the personal stories of American veterans" through the Veterans History Project (VHP) and highlighted the agency's progress in opening back up to the public.

"Reopening the buildings on and around Capitol Hill to the public must be a top priority," he said in a hearing largely focused on plans around reopening and normalizing operations.

Hayden said that over the last year the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated efforts to reach more people across the country with virtual and hybrid programming, including the 21st National Book Festival and workshops by VHP.

Hayden told the senators the Library has reopened to "at least 80%" of pre-COVID levels with a 98% staff vaccination rate.

Hayden explained that the Library began reopening in September 2020, starting with appointment-based electronic research. Then, reading rooms opened to researchers by appointment in

June and July 2021. In July 2021, the Library began welcoming public visitors under a system that relies on free timed-entry passes to allow for social distancing.

The Library expanded information kiosks as part of reopening and launched a virtual volunteer program in which volunteers appear on a screen in the Great Hall to answer questions from visitors. Hayden said the Library will continue to use virtual docents and volunteers to aid visitors, "because that was very successful."

Staff from the Capitol Visitor Center have been detailed to the Library to help plan for increased visitor attendance, Hayden reported.

"We expect to see a significant increase in visitors in the next three to five years," she said, noting that the Library will unveil a treasures gallery in late 2023 as part of the new visitor experience being developed for the Jefferson Building.

Asked about security in the after-

math of Jan. 6, Hayden told Reed the Library is working closely with the U.S. Capitol Police to put in place several measures, including limiting building entrances, upgrading cellular communications and enhancing its security system and video surveillance.

Reed also asked how the Library is coping with inflation, currently at 8.6%. Hayden said labor costs have escalated, especially in hard-to-fill categories. To mitigate inflation, the Library weighs a range of measures in every budget cycle, including slow-downs in hiring and programs and delays in some contracts.

Reed praised the Library's efforts to increase public outreach through online events and noted that the agency "sacrificed a major collection storage construction project" due to congressional unmet costs related to the pandemic and the aftermath of Jan. 6.

Monies allocated in fiscal 2021 to

SENATE, CONTINUED ON 8

BAHRAINI SPEAKER VISITS LIBRARY



Elaina Finkelstein

Fawzia Abdulla Yusuf Zainal (center), speaker of Bahrain's parliament, views collection items in the African and Middle Eastern Division on June 16.

06 WEDNESDAY

Concert: Homegrown features the Rodopi Ensemble performing traditional Greek music native to the Thrace mountain region. Noon, [online](#). Contact: taus@loc.gov.

07 THURSDAY

Webinar: A discussion of the Work Projects Administration poster collection and how to use it. 7 p.m., [online](#). Contact: rbru@loc.gov.

Live at the Library: The Jefferson Building and its exhibitions will be open for extended hours with happy hour drinks and food available. 5 to 8:30 p.m., Great Hall. [Tickets required](#). Contact: 7-8000.

Concert: The group Elikeh will perform Afro-pop music. 7 p.m., Jefferson Building southeast lawn. Contact: 7-8000.



Film: Outdoor screening of “Top Gun” (1986). 8 p.m., Jefferson Building southeast lawn. Contact: 7-8000.

09 FRIDAY

Webinar: Learn about the application process for the Community Collections grant program. 4 p.m., [online](#). Contact: demc@loc.gov.

Request ADA accommodations for events five business days in advance at 7-6362 or ADA@loc.gov. See www.loc.gov/events

SENATE, CONTINUED FROM 7

construct the Library’s Module 7 collection storage facility in Fort Meade, Maryland, were reprogrammed by the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) to address these costs.

The project, Reed said, must be funded in the coming fiscal year. Funding for it is included in AOC’s fiscal 2023 budget request.

The Library’s budget request for fiscal 2023 includes funds for initiatives focused on information technology, financial infrastructure and public engagement.

Among other items, the request seeks \$1.5 million to establish a dedicated Cloud Management Office; \$7.2 million for the Integrated Research and Information System of the Congressional Research Service; \$4.1 million to expand IT planning and project

management; \$1.5 million for the financial management system of the legislative branch, which has migrated to the cloud; \$1.8 million for the Library’s financial infrastructure; and \$1.1 million to hire 13 employees to enhance visitor engagement.

The request would fund a total of 59 new staff positions in support of proposed initiatives.

For a more complete breakdown of the Library’s budget request, see the [May 6 issue of the Gazette](#) and the Library’s [detailed budget justification](#).

“The Library’s 2023 congressional budget justification continues a sequence of strategically planned modernization efforts throughout the institution,” Hayden said. “With the support of Congress, we will continue to strengthen our capacity to carry out our mission.” ■

OIG WOULD LIKE TO KNOW

Report suspected illegal activities, waste, fraud, abuse and mismanagement in Library of Congress administration and operations to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). A link to all Library regulations is [available on the staff intranet](#).

To make a report, contact OIG via its [online form](#) or report by mail to 101 Independence Ave., S.E., LM 630, Washington, D.C., 20540-1060.

FUTUREBRIDGE MENTORING PROGRAM

Applications for the [FutureBridge mentoring program](#) will be accepted from July 11 through July 28.

More details will be published in the July 15 Gazette issue. Questions? Send an email to futurebridge@loc.gov.

HCD SERVICES PORTAL

In the new hybrid workplace, the [Human Capital Directorate \(HCD\) services portal](#) is there to help. Ask questions of HCD professionals; submit documents related to benefits, retirement and payroll matters; and track requests.

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